

PEARL OF AN ISLAND

Our New Possession in the West Indies.

AN AMERICAN'S IMPRESSIONS

Alluring Field Presented for American Capital. Picturesque Description of Some Striking Conditions. Damage Done by Hurricane.

(By Eugene J. Bellenet.)

San Juan de Puerto Rico, Oct. 5, 1919.

San Juan de Puerto Rico, to the peripatetic American tourist, would be quite an innovation. Unlike Santiago de Cuba, there was no extensive war and awful shedding of blood attendant upon the occupation of the island of Puerto Rico by the American army. The excitement and novelty of the changing times and conditions which prevailed during the earlier days of the American occupation has all passed, and everything has now settled down to a peaceful and expectant quietude, to the credit, be it said, of the peace-loving inhabitants of this little island, who though now laboring under conditions as hard as not worse—as those which formerly existed under Spanish rule, they are patiently awaiting the solution of the numerous and, I may say, complex questions continually arising for the betterment of the island, both from a financial aspect and otherwise, which, upon their satisfactory settlement will no doubt result to the good and benefit of Puerto Rico—an island which possesses a climate and a soil, which for fertility and productiveness is not equaled by that of California, and which, even under the most favorable conditions, will produce fruits, vegetables and the like, of such immensity and exquisite delicacy of taste that will be the wonder and utter astonishment of those who have been promulgating a popular notion the best portion of their lives, and who are calculated to know a thing or two in this respect. The severe hurricane of August 13th, last, has done much towards retarding the progress of the hitherto fairly prosperous condition of the island, and has caused an immense lot of suffering among the poor people, whose means of subsistence have been thus destroyed. The condition of those people who live in the country districts is pitiable in the extreme, more so even than those living in the cities, where work of some kind throughout the year, and generally by hand. The banana and plantain upon which these people subsist principally, and which are prepared by them in a score of different ways, and in consequence they have been obliged to accept the generosity of the people of the United States, and also the United States government, who have, since the hurricane, been very generous in distributing food, medicines and money to the destitute and suffering. The damage to the coffee crop of the island, as well as the tobacco and sugar cane, has been very great, and it will take a long while for these crops to fully recuperate from the fearful blow sustained.

THE DAMAGE WROUGHT.

The damage wrought by the hurricane has been variously estimated from \$20,000,000 to \$50,000,000, and the loss of life from 800 to 1,000, of which of the latter, the largest number was at Ponce, the largest city of the island, which seems to have borne the brunt of the storm, and where the loss of life has been estimated at about 600. Very fortunately, San Juan escaped the worst of the storm, though at times the velocity of the wind was terrific. The principal damage done here, outside of the unroofing of the theatre and other buildings in the city, and one of which caused universal sorrow and regret among the people, was the havoc the storm played with the magnificent statue of Christopher Columbus, located in the principal plaza of the city—Plaza de Cristobal Colon. The uplifted hand of this statue was blown entirely off from the body, as clean and neat as if it had been accomplished with the aid of tools for the purpose. It was also otherwise badly damaged. This statue, made entirely of fine Italian marble, was erected here a few years ago by the city of San Juan in honor of the great discoverer at a cost of \$40,000.

THE CAPITAL CITY.

San Juan, the capital city, situated on the northern coast of the island, and at which the headquarters of the army are located, and from which all the affairs of the island are managed and directed, is a small place of about one and a half square miles in area, and contained in this small bit of the earth's surface there is the incredible number of 35,000 people, mostly negroes. The lower portion of the residences here—even of the best and most prominent families—all of which are built with court-yards, called "patios," are tenanted by negroes, and it is not infrequently that forty or more people occupy perhaps five or six of the rooms on the ground floor. The overcrowding of the lower portion of these houses is, to my mind, a matter that should receive prompt attention from our government, and the evil practice abolished. A family of eleven persons, consisting of the father, mother and nine children, occupied one lower room in the house of a prominent family here. A short time after their occupancy of the room, the father developed unmistakable signs of that dread disease—leprosy. Before the matter was discovered by the local board of health, the disease had been transmitted to two of his children. At this stage, the matter was reported to the proper authorities, and the parties were all promptly isolated at the Lazareto, established on the Isle of Caguas.

The streets of San Juan are all exceptionally well paved with small sized Belgian blocks, and they are at all times a model of neatness, being swept daily by an organized body of native street cleaners. In comparison, San Juan, Puerto Rico, is as different from Santiago de Cuba as day is from night. There is no yellow fever, or other fever peculiar to a tropical climate in

San Juan, and it has been singularly free from epidemics of all kinds.

MANY FINE HOTELS.

There are many fine hotels here, among the principal of which are "The Inglaterra" and "The Francia," the cuisine and appointment of both of which will compare favorably with some of our best hotels in the states. There are also here, as elsewhere, numerous boarding houses at which accommodations can be secured at a reasonable price. An intending visitor to Puerto Rico who probably expects to put up with very ordinary accommodations during his sojourn here would be very agreeably surprised at the comfortable and inexpensive manner he can live at some of the best hotels of this place. However, there is one discomfort that the Americans have to contend with, and that is the iron-clad rule that has been established by the hotels of only serving strong black coffee and a little fruit as the first meal of the day, and again, the almost universal custom of cooking garlic in the food.

Puerto Rico, with its superb climate, and barring hurricanes such as that of last August, which occur about once in a century, presents an alluring field for an American hotel.

HARASSING HAIR.

While General Davis, the military governor of Puerto Rico, has established many new reforms and customs here, still there is one thing that he has not modestly, and which, in my opinion, and to many other nervous American residents, is as abominable as the desecration of the Sabbath by the opening of the theatre and saloons here, or the cock fights on Sunday, which was formerly the custom here, and that is the fiendish, senseless, and harassing ringing of the church bells of the large cathedral at San Juan. There are about five or six bells in the tower of the old cathedral, varying in tone from a shrill tenor down to a deep throbbing bass. These bells are rung all through the week and Sunday, too, without rhyme or reason.

ANOTHER INSURANCE.

Another nuisance to which a ship should be put is the large amount of street vending carried on by the natives here. All kinds of articles, from food and wear, are sold by peddlars, who begin their traffic in the early hours of the morning by crying in their loudest and most discordant tones the excellence and cheapness of their goods for sale, and only cease late at night. The old axiom of "early to bed, early to rise," could be very well reversed in Puerto Rico to "late to bed and early to rise, &c.," as it is impossible to sleep after 6 A. M. in the morning, and before 12 or 1 o'clock at night.

On Sunday and Wednesday evenings the brass band of San Juan, composed entirely of Puerto Ricans, assemble in the principal plaza, and discourse favorite American and Spanish airs to the delight and amusement of the parading throng gathered on these evenings. The Puerto Ricans possess rare musical ability, and their rendition of the most difficult compositions is certainly most creditable to their musical training. A Puerto Rican father hardly considers his child's education as complete without the addition of music to the list of his accomplishments. San Juan, in addition to its splendid band, boasts of two excellent clubs, "The Cosmopolitan" and the "Clubs Espanol."

AMERICAN AIRS.

The avidity and quickness with which the small native boys pick up the American airs, and also, by the way, the choicest of our English "cuss" words is remarkable. It seems to be the first thing they will learn in the English language. They will use the most profane language on any and all occasions without the least cause or provocation, and which, no doubt to their mind, they consider the very acme of good Americanism. It is not an uncommon occurrence to see a black boy, about three feet in height, walking proudly down one of the principal streets of San Juan, rehearsing to himself, utterly oblivious of who may chance to hear him, some of the most blood-curdling American oaths, which would put to shame the efforts of an "old salt" in this direction.

FRUIT RAISING INDUSTRY.

The raising of fruit for the American markets promises to be one of the great industries of Puerto Rico. At present such fruits as oranges, bananas, and coconuts grow in a wild state, and little or no attention is paid to their cultivation by the natives here. With a little careful cultivation, all of these fruits could be made to produce abundantly. This island possesses an unusually inviting field for fruit raising; frost is never known here; labor is exceedingly cheap, and a person with a small capital of, say \$5,000 to \$10,000, to invest in orange lands, provided, of course, he has the means to tide him over until his grove begins to bear fruit, would be insured after that period a comfortable yearly income from his investment. The raising of coconuts also presents many inducements to the investor. There are many Puerto Ricans who are enjoying good incomes derived from their coconut groves. It requires but little or no labor to start a coconut farm; after the seed has been planted, further care of cultivation is not necessary, and at the end of about five years the trees will begin bearing coconuts, which, when ripe, drop off the tree. They are then gathered by the "peons" and the coconut is ready for the market.

Sugar plantations need large capital. Much of the profit comes from the economical handling of the cane, and the better the machinery, the greater the income. Today the best sugar plantations here produce about 400 pounds per acre, some years ago many of them produced as much as 9,000 pounds, and the lands were cropped again and again without replanting. The cane was cut down, new shoots at once sprouted up about the old stalks, and within a few months there was another crop ready for cutting. The machinery used in the sugar cane plantations in Puerto Rico is not the most modern. Most of the mills are old fashioned and wasteful. On a few of the plantations there are roadways from the field to the factory. One or two estates of prominent and wealthy planters have steam engines to pull the cars over the track, while on others this work is done by oxen. Upon the smaller plantations the cane is hauled in ox carts, and nearly everywhere, the sugar when manufactured is carried to the sea board by oxen.

IMPRESSIVE EVENT

Laying of First Presbyterian Church Cornerstone Today.

NEW EPISCOPAL CHURCH

November 1st Selected as the Date for the Corners one Lying. May Be Moved Up One Day, Bishop Randolph to Be the Orator.

It is expected that there will be a large attendance this afternoon at the laying of the cornerstone of the First Presbyterian church, on Thirty-second street. The exercises will be impressive, instructive and interesting.

Rev. Dr. Kerr, who will deliver the principal address, notified the pastor, Rev. E. T. Wellford, that he would be down this morning on the 11 o'clock train.

Judge B. R. Wellford, of Richmond, father of the pastor, and also Past Master Mason, arrived last night. He was accompanied by Mrs. Wellford and daughter.

Following is the program:
1. Long Metre Dextology.
2. Invocation—Rev. E. T. Wellford.
3. Masonic Ceremonies—
The procession will form in the following order under the supervision of the Marshal:
Soddy's Home Band.
Hampton Commandery, No. 17, Knights Templar.
Bremont Lodge, No. 241, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, and visiting brethren, in the following order:
Tiger, with drawn sword.
Two Stewards, with White Rods.
Master Masons.
Past Masters.
A Past Master, with Vessel containing Corn.
Three Master Masons, with Square, Level and Plumb.
Two Past Masters, with Vessels containing Oil and Wine.
Treasurer and Secretary.
Five Master Masons, carrying the Five Orders of Architecture.
One Large Light, borne by a Past Master.
Senior and Junior Wardens.
The Holy Bible, Square and Compasses, borne by a Past Master (or some venerable Brother), supported by two Stewards, with Black Rods.
Two Large Lights, borne by two Past Masters.
Chaplain.
A Past Master, carrying the Book of Constitutions.
The Worshipful Master, supported by the Senior and Junior Deacons.

EPISCOPAL CORNERSTONE.

The scheduled date for the laying of the cornerstone of the new Episcopal church building on Thirty-fourth street is November 1, but it is probable that this date may be moved up just one day—to Thursday instead of Wednesday.

November 1 is the day upon which Rev. Bishop A. M. Randolph, D. D., has signified his ability to be present, but he will not be able to get here before 4 o'clock, which would throw the beginning of the exercises at 4:30 o'clock, which is considered by some as a little too late.

Bishop Randolph will deliver the address of the occasion. If he can arrange to come Thursday at an earlier hour the exercises may be postponed to that date. The bishop is one of the most eloquent and forceful speakers in the pulpit of the South. He is a man of extremely wide culture and of large education. There is probably no speaker in the South whose diction is more beautiful and, at the same time, logical.

THE EXERCISES.

The exercises, as in the case of the Presbyterian church, will be conducted by Bremond Lodge, A. F. & A. M.

THREE CONVERSIONS.

"Oh, Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity"—Hosea XIV:1.
This was the basis for the sermon preached by Rev. Bernard F. Lipscomb in the revival services at the Washington Avenue Methodist church last night, before a large congregation.

The exhortation, he said, implied that Israel could return, and the implication was correct. The indictment contained in the text applied to men today as well as to those to whom it was addressed. Somewhere and to some extent all have fallen and this invitation was as applicable now as when it was written.

Mr. Lipscomb dwelt upon the loving kindness and tender mercy of the Lord to those who confess their sins and start out to live a new life. There was another side to the question, and while it was necessary some times to thunder forth denunciations of God upon those who outrage his statutes, he preferred to dwell upon the other side of the question, and unless a man was lost to all the influences of nobility he would respond more quickly to affection than to the law. It was possible to bound a man into power with the hammer of the law without winning his heart.

The invitation was extended in a touching and tender manner and three persons responded.

Services again tonight at 7:30 o'clock.

Meeting Place Changed.

The Newport News Light Infantry will meet tonight and hereafter until further arrangements are made over the First National Bank, on the third floor. It is understood that the Casino will eventually be obtained for an armory.

Money to Loan.

To the man who has saved his earnings and wants to purchase a home we can lend money and allow him to pay it back in small monthly payments.

10-18-6t IRWIN TUCKER & CO.

Made on Monday, sold on Tuesday, won on Wednesday, washed on Friday, ready on Sunday—Box, 25c.

10-19-11. WOODWARD & WOMBLE.

Want a House?

If you do call on us in person or by telephone. We have for rent several new and nicely situated residences with all modern improvements which we can rent reasonably.

WANT INSURANCE?

If you do make us a visit. We are agents for the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, the largest Life Insurance Company in the world and can offer you a contract that is liberal and fair. We are also agents for the United Fire Insurance Company, whose assets are \$5,000,000.

WANT TO INVEST?

We have a large list of improved and unimproved real estate for sale, including properties which yield from ten to twenty per cent. net on the purchase price. We especially recommend to investors and speculators several tracts of land which we have for sale between Newport News and Hampton, which can be put into lots and sold to good advantage.

IRWIN TUCKER & CO.

Washington Avenue and Twenty-eighth Street.



Sir Thos. Lipton

Wants to carry away the American Cup. We don't want him to, but we want you to carry away one of our

Celebrated American-Made Suits, at \$10 to \$18.

Our Shoes

For Men, Women and Boys, are as good as can be produced. Try a pair; prices from

\$1.50 TO \$6.00

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Beginning Today The Union Stables D. C. Perkins, Prop. Will have Carriages on the Streets

day and night, for the accommodation of the public. If you want a carriage, call up No. 64 either 'phone, 29th Street and Lafayette Avenue, Newport News, Va.

THE SATISFACTOR / STORE 2714 WASHINGTON AVE.

GARNER'S

Overcoat Offerings.

\$7.75 OVERCOATS and TOP COATS. All wool covert cloth, silk velvet collar, cut in the most stylish fashion. We ask you to compare this with any \$10 overcoat in the city.

\$8.50 OVERCOAT. All wool fancy back covert Overcoat, piped seams, tailored in the most improved fashion. Equal of any \$12.50 overcoat in the city.

\$10.00 OVERCOAT. All wool blue Melton, raw edged lapped seams, silk velvet collar, double stitched; a coat made specially for us only. Equal of any \$15 overcoat.

\$15.00 OVERCOAT. The latest out, a whip cord imported overcoat, made in the latest English fashion, lined with Skinner's satin, fancy back; must be seen to be appreciated.

Our Fall Souvenir: A Guaranteed Watch. **GARNER'S,** Reliable Clothing House. One Price to All, and That the Lowest. 2714 Washington Avenue.

THE "EMPIRE'S"

GENTS' OUTFITTING NEWS

Many Impressive Bargain Events for This Week

EXTRAORDINARY SALE OF MEN'S HALF HOSE. In very fine cotton, seamless foot, BLUE, RED, BLACK, or BROWN. POLKA DOTS, or STRIPES, also CAMEL'S HAIR and NATURAL GREY, HALF WOOL. The regular 25c kind. This week's price, 15 cents the pair.

WHITE & COMPANY'S \$4.50 MEN'S SHOES AT \$3.48. This shoe is made of the best quality BOX Calf, in bull dog toe, solid oak tan soles. The \$4.50 kind, at \$3.48.

"Bengal Shirts"—"Tiger Brand." THE NOBBY DRESSY, UP TO DATE SHIRT. In fancy bordered bosom, with one half detached cuffs, PATTERNS, POLKA DOTS, ROMAN STRIPES, FLEUR DE LIS or white. Value \$1.50 the WORLD OVER. This week's price, \$1 each.

THE HANDSOMEST ASSORTMENT OF NECKWEAR IN THE CITY. LARGEST ASSORTMENT OF MEN'S PANTS IN THE CITY. In fact, we do not fear to compare any article in our store, (quality and price) with any of our competitors. MONEY SAVED IS MONEY MADE. TAKE THE HINT AND CALL.

THE "EMPIRE,"

3104 Washington Avenue, near 31st Street, Newport News, Va.

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Until September 18th we will issue scholarships for our full Business and Shorthand Courses, the regular price of which is \$60, for \$50; scholarships for either the Business or Shorthand Course, the regular price of which is \$40, for \$25. Application for membership should be made at once. Call or send for catalogue and our new publication entitled "Business Education." J. M. RESSLER, President. Special rates for board for students from NEWPORT NEWS and HAMPTON. Phone 456. 9-8-11.

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